

If we love, we will renew!!!

Fr Joshua D'Souza, Executive Secretary of the CCBI Commission for Ecology

What do you think - '**Is Climate Crisis real?**' (*formally known as climate change, yes, it's a crisis now!*)

For some, the answer is **YES**, we do believe that Climate Crisis is real, and all of us have a role to play in it. For others, the answer is **NO**, it is not real. It is merely a hyped-up situation fabricated by some very sceptical people. And for most of us, the answer is **MAYBE**, it does exist but it's not as bad as people say it is and will probably never affect us in our lifetime, at least not directly.

Well, the fact is that **Climate Crisis is very much real and the Church realizes the intensity of this problem.** Keeping this in mind, we all share a common role to play in this world. Major Christian communities have been coming together since the past two decades to pray, act, and advocate for their common home. However, as the climate emergency and ecological crisis persist at dangerous levels, more purposeful and unified prayers and actions are needed.

Thus, the SEASON OF CREATION (SOC) was embraced by many Christian Churches, and also by the Roman Catholic Church in 2015 by Pope Francis.

The theme for the year 2021 is: "**A home for all? Renewing the *Oikos* of God**". The Greek word '*Oikos*' means Home, which is now in danger!

So, let's get the *5W1H* of the Season of Creation! (WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW)

WHO can be part of SOC? Anyone and everyone who loves God and believes that this world has been created by Him.

WHAT is the SOC? The Season of Creation is that time of the year when the world's 2.2 billion Christians are invited to pray and care for creation. This event unites the global Christian family around one shared purpose. It also provides flexibility in celebrating prayer services and engaging in a variety of actions to care for Mother Earth.

WHEN do we celebrate the SOC? It starts on 01 September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and ends on 04 October, the Feast of St. Francis, the patron Saint of Ecology beloved by many.

WHERE do we celebrate the SOC? Anywhere we want to. Preferably start off small, first our personal life, then our homes, maybe our parish, neighbourhood, communities, associations we are involved in, institutions we are connected with, **our** workplace, the list goes on. Since most of our time is spent online, we can also follow online campaigns, petitions, groups, share photos poems, art, blogs, etc on social media in order to create awareness and garner support from the online global community.

WHY do we celebrate the SOC? We humans share a common role as caretakers of God's creation. Thus, our wellbeing is interwoven with the wellbeing of all creation.

We have to ensure a just home for all creatures to thrive. That requires ecological, economic, and technological solutions that are rooted in a faithful vision of justice for the dignity of every creature.

HOW can we celebrate the SOC?

The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment.

As the saying goes, “Let us live simply so that others may simply live.” Living simply is a way to ensure our planet is truly a home for all. We can initiate or join events to make sustainable changes at the Individual Level and the Institutional Level.

Calculating your carbon footprint, conducting regular energy and water audits, managing your transport, helping stray animals, minimizing wastage of food and water, organizing prayer services, ecological rosaries, creation walks, community gardens, following the SOC 2021 calendar,.. the list goes on. You need to see what works best for you and our ‘common home’ (*oikos*). You can visit the website SeasonofCreation.org for more ideas and campaigns.

MARY is the mother of new creation.

As mother Earth is our common home(*oikos*) and we are called to serve our mother, similarly we all share a common mother in Mary. Mary’s uncompromising “yes” to God is the reason she is called the **Mother of God**. Her action demonstrates the surrender that is required if we want to participate in God’s work of redemption and renewal of his creation. Mary did not just say “yes” to God but to also whatever He created. This makes Mary an integral part of God’s Creation. Mary played her role in taking care of God’s creation. It is now time for us to do the same. We are called during this Season of Creation to do what Mary did, to say YES to God and to renew what He has created.

As Mary rejoiced in God’s new creation growing within her womb, so too should we rejoice as we grow in the natural goodness, balance, and beauty of the Earth’s habitats.

Veneration of Mary as Mother of all that has been recreated must find its expression in care for the Earth.

Therefore let us remember, **if we love, we will renew!!!!**

Questions for discussion:

1. What is the LOGO for this year’s Season Of Creation? Why was it chosen?
2. What aspect of Mary can you imitate, which will help you renew our common home?
3. List 3 things that you can concretely and practically implement/do in your life which will help renew the Earth.

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